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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Taking Precautious Measures and Actions Towards Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Kankakee, IL – As the world continues to take action against Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), state and local officials are working daily to address the matter in our communities. Governor JB Pritzker announced that by the end of today on Monday, March 16, 2020, all bars and restaurants in the state of Illinois will be closed through Monday, March 30, 2020.

“This is another hard step to take. I know how difficult this will be on small businesses around the state, but we must do everything we can to safeguard the health of the citizens of Illinois, and that requires this urgent action,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “The time for persuasion and public appeals is over – the time for action is here. This is not a joke. No one is immune to this, and you have an obligation to act in the best interests of all the people of this state.”

Currently, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is reporting 93 cases in 13 counties in Illinois. There are no confirmed cases in Kankakee County at this time. Symptoms for Coronavirus include fever, cough, shortness of breath and potentially respiratory distress. COVID-19 has been shown to spread between people. Human coronaviruses typically spread through the air by coughing and sneezing. Health officials encourage you to wash your hands for at least 20 seconds, avoid close contact with those who are sick, avoid touching your face, cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue before throwing it away, clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, and stay at home if you are sick.

The City of Kankakee has been posting updates as COVID-19 continues to develop. Mayor Wells-Armstrong released an updated statement Sunday night in regards to viewing City Council on Monday, March 16, 2020 on the City of Kankakee’s website at <https://citykankakee-il.gov/chambervideo.php> or on Channel 4 on Comcast. All

presentations scheduled for Monday night's City Council meeting on March 16, 2020 have been postponed due to limiting crowds who would be present.

In an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19, social distancing actions include limiting larger groups of people gathering in spaces. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is now urging a nationwide halt to gatherings of more than 50 people for the next eight weeks.

Impacted employees can file for unemployment compensation through the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) if they have been laid off work due to no fault of their own (pandemic). Unemployment claims can be filed online. Governor Pritzker is seeking a waiver for employees and Mayor Wells-Armstrong stated that she will inquire about the mandatory wait week which is tied to filing the initial unemployment claim. You can find more information on unemployment here: <https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/>.

Other city updates include Mayor Wells-Armstrong granting Fortitude Community Outreach Shelter to set up a trailer in the Depot area downtown Kankakee to provide meals to the homeless. Fortitude announced that the shelter will be closing this week until further notice to protect guests and many of the volunteers who happen to be among our senior population from the spread of COVID-19. They are working on securing hotel rooms. Fortitude will also be providing sleeping bags and blankets.

Mayor Wells-Armstrong also announced that she will be seeking additional information and resources in regards to small business owners/entrepreneurs impacted by COVID-19.

In an effort to protect emergency response personnel, if you are calling for any emergency, please inform the 911 telecommunicator if you are experiencing any flu like symptoms.

Kankakee's Economic and Community Development Agency (ECDA) events and public meetings have been postponed until further notice.

Adjudication court on March 19, 2020 scheduled for 2:00 p.m., and on April 16, 2020 scheduled for 2:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Building in Kankakee will also be postponed until further notice. Notices will be going out to those who are impacted.

"Please follow the City of Kankakee's social media sites and website for all updates. This pandemic is evolving **hourly** across the world and we need to have a systemic approach to managing our community during this time. Our actions impact others and we need to be mindful of working together during this time. While I do not want to promote fear, I want us to do our part to promote health and safety. Thank you to our medical professionals and first responders who cannot limit social distance at this time because you are taking care of all of us. Let's focus on what matters most right now: people, public health and public safety," said Mayor Wells-Armstrong.

You can find updates, helpful links and more information specifically on Coronavirus (COVID-19) on the City of Kankakee's website here: <https://citykankakee-il.gov/Coronavirus.php>.

For additional updates, you can also follow the Kankakee County Health Department at <https://www.facebook.com/kankakeehealth/> or for questions or concerns, call the Kankakee County COVID-19 hotline at 815-802-9311.

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The City of Kankakee is dedicated to protecting, building and nurturing the community while enhancing lives. We are a historic, vibrant, and active riverfront community. We continue to transform into an extraordinary place to dream, grow, and thrive. Embracing our diversity, we strive to be progressive, inclusive, and innovative. For more information on the City of Kankakee, please visit the website at www.citykankakee-il.gov.